

**NEWINGTON PARKS & RECREATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2015 (Revised 10/12/15)**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Don Woods called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm

II. ROLL CALL

Board: Eileen Francolino, Mary Udice, Ed Marchion, Jen Win-Johnson, Don Woods, Bill DeBlasio, Beth Manke, Mary Beth Kelliher

Board Members Absent: Richard Khentigan

Staff: Superintendent William DeMaio, Karen Gallicchio

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JULY 14, 2015

Mary Udice made a motion to approve the amended minutes of the July 14, 2015 meeting. Bill DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Rose Lyons of 46 Elton Drive: appreciates that Mr. DeMaio put this meeting on the website so other people who were interested would know about it. Rose mentioned her interest in the progress of Churchill Park Redesign. Rose is also interested in understanding the rental income that the synthetic turf field takes in per year, where it goes and what is set aside for re-carpeting in the future. Also, the pathway was cleared by her house.

Jeanne Picklesimer of 97 Vincent Drive (resident of Newington for over 50 years): Jeanne has a son with special needs and would like to see more activities offered. She had a suggestion for the new design of Churchill Park to consider a lazy river be incorporated in the park and pool area. She mentioned that a lazy river is very accessible, not intimidating for anyone of any age, and is very enjoyable and relaxing. She thinks the people of the town would benefit, it would make Newington stand out and it would be easier than going to an amusement park.

Chairman Don Woods in response to Rose Lyons: regarding the synthetic turf field, the town has a great demand for it at the moment and is in constant use by our own youth sports groups. Because of that, it has greatly outplayed what was originally expected. Bill DeMaio mentioned it is booked solid with youth football, soccer and lacrosse. The only time it is available is during the day when the kids are in school. It was rented out this summer for the Nutmeg State Games by Pat Fisher and received \$1,825.00 in income. The rental fee for a four-hour time period is \$300 for local and \$600 for non-local. It is not a huge revenue maker, but it is a complete success because it is being used by the town residents. Bill DeMaio is in the process of bidding on a lacrosse tournament which would include using the synthetic turf field.

Chairman Don Woods in response to Jeanne Picklesimer's suggestion of the lazy river: it is a clean slate--everything will be considered, open to all suggestions and is just a matter of design and budget. He likes the idea of a lazy river.

V. CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTS

From the Superintendent Bill DeMaio: Busy month, good things happening and building new relationships with sport field users. Eileen asked how the groundskeeper's costs were paid when the fields were used for the State Nutmeg Games and the State Little League Regional playoff games. Bill DeMaio said the State Nutmeg Games was a complete rental of the synthetic turf field. The Town Manager had approved the overtime and made a commitment to fix the fence at Volunteer Field for Little League playoff games to qualify for the Little League rules. Cathy Dionne, Little League President, told Bill DeMaio that the Williamsburg Little League Group mentioned how beautiful the facility in Newington is. Little League is having a luncheon for the Parks & Recreation staff in appreciation for all their efforts and hard work over the summer.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Extravaganza:

Bill DeMaio commended Karen Gallicchio on all of her hard work that she has done for the department and assisting Bill with his transition into his new position. Karen Gallicchio presented the Board members with the comparison budget for the Extravaganza. There was a profit of \$24,650.56 this year, a net gain of \$5,265.79 from last year. Some new things this year brought to the Extravaganza were fireworks' donation buckets and a few new vendors. The new Craft Beer Tasting was well received: approximately 270 people attended the event which was a good turnaround from Friday nights in years past. Jen Win-Johnson mentioned that more food needs to be offered. Mary Udice would like to have the Craft Beer Tasting event promoted next year as the 2nd Annual Craft Beer Tasting. Chairman Woods showed his appreciation to all the Board members for volunteering their time. Karen was also appreciative to the Board members for their time which cut down on staff costs. The Department saved approximately \$3,000 because the new underground electrical boxes were installed and the money for this project was not taken out of the Extravaganza budget. Bill DeMaio mentioned that it could be possible to open the carnival on Wednesday night along with the yogurt vendor. Bill DeMaio is also going to add \$5,000.00 to the fireworks budget for next year.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Churchill Park Design:

Bill DeMaio met with Architect and Engineering firm Milone and MacBroom to discuss the new design for Churchill Park. His goal is to redesign the park to be useful from 2015 and beyond. He mentioned some significant problems with the park's current design that he would like to improve and restructure. These issues include the parking lot location, cleaning out the brook that runs alongside the park, changing the look of the pond and resurfacing trails to make them handicap accessible. Also, pavilion roofs need attention, tennis and basketball courts need improvements, the pool has outlived its life expectancy, the softball field is oriented improperly and there are many other issues that need attention. The entire park is in disrepair. Bill DeMaio is currently working on solutions to revamp and redesign the park to be more up to date and be useful long into the future for many other generations to enjoy. Some solutions that he suggested were to beautify the wetlands area by opening it up near the brook and incorporate a boardwalk, make the pond bigger, change the entrance to the park and add parking and make the pathways handicap accessible. Additionally, add gazebos, include exercise features, playground equipment with rubber surfaces, walking trails with hard surfaces which will be low maintenance

and could also be used in the winter, reorient the softball field and fix the fencing. In the pool area, closer parking, up to date bath house, family destination pool with zero depth entry at one end, a lazy river ride, incorporate a splash pad (fenced in) (computerized, interactive water turns off when not being used) which can be open for a longer period of time and no life guards would be needed. Moving summer playground programs from schools to the park would also save on bussing costs. There should be a design ready by the next Board of Parks and Recreation meeting.

Park Supervisor Report:

Advertised for Park Supervisor position. A professional interview panel picked top candidates and Town Manager John Salomone and Bill DeMaio interviewed the top three candidates. Mike Hadvab has been hired and will start working for the Town of Newington on Monday, September 21st.

Out of Town Field Use Cost:

The cost for two (2) Parks and Grounds' staff members at four (4) hours to groom and maintain a field is approximately \$100.00. Bill DeMaio respectfully requested the Board of Parks & Recreation consider the following policy regarding usage of ballfields in Newington:

- \$150 for a 3-hour rental per ballfield (with the exception of any synthetic turf field) in the Town of Newington for those Adult or Youth teams with less than 90% Newington residents
- \$75 for a 3-hour rental per ballfield (with the exception of any synthetic turf field) in the Town of Newington for those Adult teams with at least 90% Newington residents

MOTION: A motion was made by Mary Udice to charge \$150 (for 3 hours per field) for Adults or Youth teams with less than 90% Newington residents and \$75 (for 3 hours per field) for Adults with at least 90% Newington residents for use of town fields (excluding synthetic turf fields). Bill DeBlasio seconded the motion; all were in favor with an 8-0 vote.

Kellogg-Eddy House Rentals:

Bill DeMaio spoke with the Town Manager about opening the Kellogg-Eddy House for extra revenue. The house could be rented out for small functions such as showers, meetings and gatherings. Bill has contacted the Historical Society and Art League to meet with them to discuss the possibilities. He will be looking into whether or not the building is handicap accessible.

Sign at Clem Lemire Fence:

Build a community sign that Parks and Recreation Department can charge a fee to those who want to advertise in that space.

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Rose Lyons of 46 Elton Drive likes the sign idea at Clem Lemire. Rose asked who pays for the fire fighters and police officers for the Extravaganza. Chairman Woods said the Parks and Recreation Department pays for their services. At the informational meeting regarding Churchill

Park, Rose said some of the public seems overwhelmed by everything that is looking to be done in town and suggested maybe something should be posted on the website regarding Churchill Park. She asked how the pavilions were rented and Bill DeMaio said residents only.

Carol Anest of 30 Harding Avenue: regarding the sign at Clem Lemire, she suggested having an organization such as Kiwanis sponsor the sign so the Parks and Recreation Department would not have to pay for the sign to be built.

Gail Budrejko of 21 Isabelle Terrace: thinks the Extravaganza fireworks are a great thing, but there is some misconception by the public thinking that it is funded by tax dollars. She would like the Parks and Recreation Department to educate the public to know that it is funded by donations and the Department. Regarding Churchill Park, she thinks the plans sound wonderful but she would like the members of the Board of Parks & Recreation to also take into consideration the people who enjoy passive recreation and just want to sit and look at a beautiful area.

Extras:

- Welcome New Board Member Mary Beth Kelliher.
- Bill DeMaio mentioned a campaign to raise money for the Program Guides (brochures)-- he will be targeting businesses for sponsorship that would like to be associated with the department and advertise in the Program Guide. The cost for the Program Guides without sponsorships is approximately \$16,000.00 per year.
- Eileen Francolino would like to start up the Youth Council again that used to be run by the Parks and Recreation Department, working with the kids of high school age that need to complete community service hours which could be done at some events. Eileen also mentioned a new event to raise money could be Dock Dogs.
- Chairman Woods was inquiring about the status of the Dan Gallicchio bench. Chairman Woods also suggested Bill DeMaio contact the Mandell family for the sponsorship for the Summer Concert Series. Bill will be contacting Mr. Mandell to establish a connection with him.
- Bill DeBlasio thanked Bill DeMaio and the Parks and Recreation Grounds' crew for all their hard work for the Little League District Finals playoff games over the summer.
- Don mentioned that the new Superintendent, William DeMaio, has done so much for the Department in the past month and thinks that this department is going to do well.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: A motion was made by Mary Udice to adjourn. Bill DeBlasio seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:07 pm with an 8-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Jay